

Policy on Electronic Document Submissions

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I do not accept electronic documents that use proprietary formats, such as those created using Microsoft Office or Apple iWork.

A few of the many open (non-proprietary) formats that I do accept are: plain text, html, pdf, djvu, dvi, ps, png, jpeg, L^AT_EX, OpenDocument, OpenOffice. Please visit http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Open_format to see a more complete list of open formats, all of which I accept.

Distributing documents in proprietary formats, like Microsoft's .docx format, is bad for you and for others. You can't be sure what these documents will look like if someone views them with a different version of Word; they may not work at all.

Receiving Word documents is bad for you because they can carry viruses (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macro_virus_\(computing\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Macro_virus_(computing))). Sending Word documents is bad for you because a Word document normally includes hidden information about the author, enabling those in the know to pry into the authors activities (maybe yours). Text that you think you deleted may still be embarrassingly present. See <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/3154479.stm> for more info.

But above all, sending people Word documents puts pressure on them to use Microsoft software and helps to deny them any other choice. In effect, you become a buttress of the Microsoft monopoly. This pressure is a major obstacle to the broader adoption of free software.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation.

Sincerely,

William DeMeo

Additional resources:

<http://www.gnu.org/philosophy/no-word-attachments.html>

<https://help.ubuntu.com/community/FreeFormats>

<http://www.odfalliance.org>

<http://www.fsf.org/campaigns/opendocument>